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COPY NO. 107
SC NO. 00550/63
29 November 1963

DAILY SUMMARY

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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DAILY SUMMARY

29 November 1963

This summary of significant information has not been coordinated outside the Office of Current Intelligence. It does not represent a complete coverage of all current reports received, nor does time permit the complete evaluation of all reports which are included.

C O N T E N T S

CUBAN EXILE AND REFUGEE ACTIVITIES:

Comandos L is considering an attack against a Soviet vessel in Cuban waters in the near future or when the seas become more quiet. (Page 4)

Cubanos Libres may be planning to hijack a ship in a raid that would be staged from Miami. (Page 5)

A small group of Cuban refugees may have attempted to infiltrate Cuba about 27 November, according to a prominentexile activist. (Page 5)

BLOC RELATIONS:

The Albanian ambassador spoke to a near-empty hall in Havana on 26 November at a celebration marking his country's national holiday; the audience was composed chiefly of Chinese embassy personnel, students, and journalists. The Cuban Government was represented by an official of the foreign cultural council. (Page 5)

NON-BLOC RELATIONS:

A three-man "good-will" mission is en route to Morocco to smooth Rabat's ruffled feelings over presence of Cuban troops in Algeria. (Page 6)

The director of the Cuban petroleum enterprise is scheduled to travel to Georgetown aboard the BAHIA DE TANAMO; an untested source in Georgetown reports that Cuba will supply fuel oil for the British Guiana Electricity Corporation. (Page 6)

Cuba may establish diplomatic relations with Somalia and is attempting to improve its relations with Tanganyika and Ghana, according to intercepted communications. (Page 7)

Two representatives of the Cuban National Association of Small Farmers are planning to attend a seminar in Chile. (Page 7)

NON-BLOC COMMERCIAL RELATIONS:

Cuba is continuing negotiations for the purchase of large amounts of construction equipment, probably from the Varmi company of Brussels. (Page 7)

CUBAN SUPPORT OF EXTERNAL SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES:

The Venezuelan Government has announced the discovery of a large cache of weapons of Cuban origin; this provides the best evidence in recent years of major Cuban support for Latin American subversives. Havana radio immediately denied the charge. (Page 8)

CASTRO'S SPEECH:

Fidel's 27 November speech to the students at Havana University evidently had been scheduled some weeks ago, before the assassination of President Kennedy, and was intended as a fairly sweeping review of the country's economic situation, post-Hurricane Flora salvage operations and, lastly, the regime's plans for changes in the educational system. In fact, it was the third time in a week that Castro has addressed himself publicly and at length to the death of the late President and to imputations that the Castro regime was involved in any way. On 24 November Castro had displayed considerable apprehension that already strained US-Cuban relations would worsen markedly as a consequence of the assassination. We do not have an adequate text of Castro's seemingly impromptu remarks of 26 November to a group of high school students; but that speech apparently went little beyond his statement on the Sunday following Mr. Kennedy's death. The address of 27 November obviously was a carefully prepared refutation of charges of complicity between Castro's regime and Oswald.

Whatever the Cuban leader's intent, textual analysis of the speech neither proves nor disproves that he had advance knowledge of the plot. He is determined to indict unnamed "reactionaries" in the United States with conspiring to murder the President, using Oswald as their innocent dupe, and to frame Cuba in order to provoke punitive action by the US Government against the revolution. To this end, he presented a considerable body of "evidence"--much of it admittedly speculative--based on what is generally known about Oswald, the "normal" behavior pattern of paranoiacs, the weapon the killer used, the technical difficulties presented by the use of a telescopic sight, the 36-hour Dallas police interrogation of the alleged killer and, finally, Oswald's death at the hands of Jack Ruby in the basement of the Dallas police headquarters.

Castro rehearsed the details of Oswald's 27 September application at the Cuban consulate in Mexico City for a Cuban visa and protested the 23 November arrest of two employees of the consulate by Mexican authorities. (Castro's remarks were followed up on 28 November by the delivery of a formal protest by the Cuban Foreign Ministry to the Mexican Government--which rejected it.) Oswald's Dallas television interview in July, his attempts to infiltrate the pro-Castro Fair Play for Cuba Committee,and his street brawl with anti-Castro refugees in New Orleans--all were intended by those behind Oswald to mislead public opinion, according to Castro. And, finally, the decision of the Dallas police to "close" the Oswald case with the shooting of Sunday, 24 November, "demonstrates that the persons guilty of the death of Kennedy needed and urgently had to eliminate the accused at any cost...so that he would not talk...."

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CASTRO'S SPEECH - cont'd

But, says the Cuban premier, the "shot has backfired." Alluding to statements made earlier in the week by physicians at Parkland Hospital, Castro claims that no one in a position to do so has said whether one or two bullets were used to kill the late President. He declared "they cannot establish which are the entry and exit wounds," implying that more than one assassin was involved and that the President was strúck both from in front and behind.

In sum, while Castro obviously was well briefed and went to some length to select "evidence" proving the guilt of domestic reactionaries in the United States (conversely clearing himself of any involvement), nothing he said indicates advance knowledge of the crime or encompasses more factual data than can be presumed to have been gleaned from the press.

The balance of the 27 November speech, the part which Castro told his listeners comprised the address he originally intended to deliver, was devoted to a somewhat rambling assessment of Cuba's economic health. It can be summed up for the most part with the quote: "Things are progressing in our country and they are going well, despite the obstacles, despite the hurricane...." As he has done before, Castro blamed the sloth and ineptitude of the Cuban bourgeousie for the "mismanagement, lack of concern for expenditures, by lack of concern not only for the quantity but also the quality of what we produced" immediately after the fall of Batista. He reviewed the "tremendous ideological battle...it was a battle between ideas and theories..." within the regime during its first two years in power, said that the government officials had become too "argumentative," and admitted that for a time the regime had been incapable of compensating for the loss of trade with the non-Communist world. Today, he boasted, Cuba "can trade with any country in the world; we can offer an advantageous exchange because we no longer have to sell sugar to Japan, England, Spain, France and most of the countries with which we traded, take their dollars and use them to pay the Yankee imperialists." Instead, Cuba can plow back into its internal development revenue derived from foreign trade, and develop to the maximum the use of those natural resources which are in demand.

Attempts to bar Cuba from the world sugar trade, he said, have resulted only in increasing the price of sugar so that the Cubans --though exporting less--are able to realize proportionately greater profits from what they do sell and more than break even. "We have been able to get wonderful prices, and we have sold sugar for 1965 for approximately 10 cents. We have made sales for 1966 at approximately 10 cents." Though the Cuban sugar growers will be affected in some measure for several years by the attempts of nonbloc states to juggle sugar prices, "we shall be in a position /1970 or-71/ to resist any price decrease in the sugar produced in the cpaItalist world." By then, "we shall be in a position to surpass the 10-million-ton figure in sugar production...."

CASTRO'S SPEECH - cont'd

Returning to the post-hurricane economic dislocation, Castro promised that by 15 December of this year full food rations would be restored and in many cases allotments increased. He called for greatly increased mechanization of agriculture and the use of the latest methods of cultivation, appealed for more food production and the recovery of arable land lost through neglect and erosion. He demanded an end to public "vice," such as official bribe-taking, theft, pilferage, etc. In the field of social welfare, Castro praised medical students for "volunteering" to serve in out-of-the-way country posts for minimum terms of two years and prophesied that "as the number of graduate doctors increases, the need for the establishment of socialized medicine once felt as a social need will not be quite as great."

Castro concluded by appealing to Cuban youth to participate "in the great task of opening new frontiers in every field...you are in a revolution that will never end." (CIA FBIS 07 and adds, 28 November, OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS:

Military headquarters on the Isle of Pines informed Armed Forces headquarters in Havana that two persons who had escaped, probably from the military prison, had not yet been recaptured. The 27 November intercepted message reported that an unsuccessful combing operation had been effected in an area indicated by two peasants who reportedly saw the escapees. (See Daily Summary of 26 November for information on other personnel being sought on the Isle of Pines.) (USN 856, 2X/SL/CUM/T405-63, 27 November, SECRET SABRE)

CUBAN INTERNAL SITUATION:

The Cuban Government may have instituted new controls on fishermen, by eliminating night fishing along the north coast and by restricting fishermen to three and one half miles from the coast. A Florida law enforcement officer was informed by the former administrator of a fishing cooperative at Isabela de Sagua that on 12 November it was rumored that no night fishing would be allowed on the north coast of Cuba after 17 November. Reportedly, those who were fishing at sunset were to anchor their boats or risk being fired upon. Another source received information thirdhand from an unidentified fisherman that in late November, Cuban fishermen were ordered by the Cuban general staff to do their fishing between three and three and one half miles from the coast. No confirmation has yet been received of these reported changes in fishing regulations. (CIA TDCSDB-3/658,077, 27 November, SECRET/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

INSURGENCY AND CIVIL UNREST:

Two additional acts of sabotage have been reported by Bureau of Public Order (BOP) officials in Matanzas Province. On 25 November nearly four tons of sugar cane were burned on the Araujo farm near Maguanito and on 27 November two empty houses were burned on the Angelina farm in the district of Maximo Gomez.

Meanwhile, First Army headquarters in Santiago de Cuba was informed by its southern sector Sierra Maestra headquarters that 87,000 arrobas of cane were burned on 17 November at Algeria del Pio near San Lorenzo in Oriente Province. (USM, 603, 2/YJ/CUP/R127-63, 28 November, SECRET KIMBO; and USN 835, 2X/LR1/CUM/T669-63, 26 November, SECRET SABRE)

On 27 and 28 November special anti-insurgent forces (LCB) in Las Villas carried out an operation against Menendez Esquijaro and his band near Sancti Spiritus. LCB field operations headquarters in Santa Clara was informed on 21 November that the operations had ended without results. (USM 603, 2X/UJ/CUM/T350-63, 28 November; and 2X/YJ/CUM/T351-63, 29 November, SECRET SABRE)

Department of State Security (DSE) officials in Nuevitas, Camaguey Province, were instructed on 28 November to mobilize militiamen into an "easily seen land patrol" at Playa Santa Lucia in order to prevent a clandestine escape attempt during the night of 28-29 November. DSE headquarters in Camaguey directed Nuevitas to coordinate the operation with LCP units and "to be especially watchful for boats." (USM 603, 2/YJ/CUP/R128-63, 29 November, SECRET KIMBO)

CUBAN EXILE AND REFUGEE ACTIVITIES:

Comandos L is considering an attack against a Soviet ship in Cuban waters, according to a member of a group of Cuban refugees who have provided useful reports. The raid, which was being discussed on 22 November, would take place in the near future or when the seas become more quiet. Reportedly, the plan would involve 15 men in three speed-boats who would rendezvous in international waters after leaving from three points along the Florida coast. In connection with the raid, Jesus Alvarez Amador picked up material on 22 November, including one box of fragmentation grenades, three magazines for a 20-mm. cannon and 87 rounds of ammunition for the same, and 15 ponchos. This equipment is being stored at the home of Jesus Vazquez, owner of Super Cake S.A., La Gran Via Bakers, Miami; Vazquez' home telephone number is 379-5218. Other weapons to be used in the operations are two 20-mm. cannons, one 57-mm. cannon, four machine guns, and two Garand rifles. Alvarez planned to go to West Palm Beach on 22 November to borrow some additional weapons. (CIA TDCS-DB-3/658, 110, 28 November, CONFIDENTIAL NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

CUBAN EXILE AND REFUGEE ACTIVITIES - cont'd

Cubanos Libres may be planning to hijack a ship in a raid that would be staged from Miami, according to a member of a group of Cuban refugees who have provided useful reports. The source reported that funds for the raid were to be raised at a dinner scheduled for 24 November in Le Tre Venezie restaurant, 472 West 9th Avenue, New York City. At the dinner, Cubanos Libres was planning to show films of their raids against Cardenas Bay in October 1962 and the Arechabala Refinery in June 1963. (CIA TDCSDB-3/658,109, 28 November, CONFIDENTIAL NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

A small group of Cuban refugees may have attempted to infiltrate Cuba about 27 November, according to a prominent exile activist who received the information from a close associate of a person involved in the attempt. Reportedly, a 20- to 22-foot speed-boat left Key Biscayne, Florida, the night of 26 November to rendezvous off Key Largo with a Cuban fishing boat and then proceed to an infiltration point on the north coast of Las Villas. The fishing boat is reportedly based in a shrimp fishery on the southeast coast of Key Largo. The persons involved in the operation were Manuel Pedro Gutierrez Cardenas, and presumably two infiltrees--Emilio Perez Fernandez and Luis Aguiar Perez. Two crew members, known only by nicknames, were "Comacho" and "Vascoy," possibly Jose Bascoy Barrios. (CIA TDCSDB-3/658,104, 27 November, SECRET/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

BLOC RELATIONS:

The Albanian ambassador to Cuba, Josif Pogace, delivered a speech to a nearly empty hall in Havana on 26 November. A Polish correspondent in Havana informed Warsaw that the speech, in celebration of Albania's national holiday, was attended by only 80 people, mostly Chinese Communist embassy personnel, students, and journalists. Cuba was represented by an official of the Cuban foreign cultural council. The Polish correspondent reports that the audience applauded the ambassador's words on the subject of "contemporary revisionism" and "the revisionist blockade of Albania" but reacted with silence to his attack on "false guarantees for Cuba." (CIA FBIS 105, 27 November, OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

NON-BLOC RELATIONS:

The Castro regime, which has yet to acknowledge publicly the Moroccan Government's severance of diplomatic relations following the arrival of Cuban troops in Algeria in late September, is attempting to placate Rabat. On 26 November, Foreign Minister Raul Roa advised the secretary general of the Moroccan Foreign Ministry that a three-man "good-will mission," composed of Dr. Antonio Carrillo Carreras, Enrique Vian Audivert of the Ministry of Foreign Trade, and Dr. Enrique Rodriguez Loeches, the Cuban ambassador to Morocco, would leave for Rabat the next day "to begin conversations with your illustrious government with a view to clearing up the unfortunate misunderstandings which may have arisen...." The Moroccans, who since breaking off formal diplomatic relations have become alarmed by the realization of the extent to which they depend on their sugar imports from Cuba and the dislocation which the loss of these imports would entail, probably will give the Cuban delegation a sympathetic hearing. Nevertheless it is unlikely that Rabat will agree at this time to return an ambassador to Cuba or to disavow publicly its renunciation of diplomatic ties so long as Cuban troops remain in Algeria.

On 21 November, Rabat instructed one of the junior members of its embassy who had remained in Cuba when the ambassador departed to remain at his post until he had closed out all financial dealings with Cuban banks, etc., and to forward pertinent documents on his activities to Morocco's Permanent Mission to the UN. Two days later the secretary general of the Moroccan Foreign Ministry cabled Havana that his government was inclined to receive a Cuban good-will mission. (NSA, 3/O/MRD/T329-63, 21 November; 3/O/MRD/T329-63, 23 November; 3/O/MRD/T335-63, 26 November, TOP SECRET DINAR)

The director of the Cuban Government - owned Consolidated Petroleum Enterprise, Salvador Salas Portuondo, is scheduled to travel to Georgetown, British Guiana, on a Cuban vessel. On 21 November Cuban shipping headquarters in Havana informed the captain of the BAHIA DE TANAMO that Salas would be traveling to Georgetown from Santiago de Cuba. Meanwhile, an untested source who is a member of the board of the British Guiana Electricity Corporation reports that GIMPEX has been awarded the contract to provide fuel oil for the electricity corporation for 1964. GIMPEX, Jagan's party's trading enterprise, reportedly intends to import the oil from Cuba. The electricity corporation will pay $240,000 for the oil. (USM-84, 2X/O/CUC/T406-63, 27 November, SECRET SABRE; and CIA TDCS-3/566,043, 28 November, CONFIDENTIAL NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

NON-BLOC RELATIONS - cont'd

Cuba may establish diplomatic relations with Somalia and is attempting to improve its relations with Tanganyika and Ghana, according to intercepted communications. In a 27 November intercepted message, the Somali Government informed its United Nations representative that the Council of Ministers had approved the establishment of relations with Cuba, and instructed him to determine the level at which the Cubans wanted to exchange representatives. In a 26 November message, the Cuban Foreign Ministry requested its Prague embassy to obtain customs exemptions for three personnel who were on their way to Tanganyika. Cuba does not currently have diplomatic representatives in Tanganyika and the Cubans may be on a good-will mission which is expected in that country. (See article above on good-will mission to Morocco.) The three Cubans--Juan Felipe Benemelis Varona, second secretary of the Cuban Embassy in Accra, Nevris Vernier, attaché at the embassy in Accra, and Jose Antonio Benitez Cabrera, an attaché of the Cuban Embassy in Prague--were scheduled to arrive in Prague on 27 November. In another intercepted message of 25 November, Havana instructed its ambassador in Ghana to sign a cultural pact with Ghana during the first part of December. The Cuban representative was told to sign the Ghanaian-inspired pact "out of political considerations." (NSA 3/0/SOD/T202-63, 27 November, TOP SECRET DINAR; NSA 2X/0/CUB/T2439-63, 27 November, SECRET SABRE; NSA 3/0/CUD/T1385-63, 27 November, TOP SECRET DINAR)

The Cuban Government requested Chilean visas for two members of National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP)--Juan Jorge Valdez Paz and Adelfo Martin Barrios--to attend a "cooperative seminar" (sic; possibly, seminar on cooperatives) to be held in Santiago. An 11 November intercepted message stated that their visit would last 15 days. (NSA 3/0/CLD/T1086-63, 27 November, TOP SECRET DINAR)

NON-BLOC COMMERCIAL RELATIONS:

Cuba is continuing negotiations for the purchase of large amounts of construction equipment, probably from the Varmi company of Brussels. (See Daily Summary of 7 November for details of Varmi's offer.) According to an employee of the Spanish export-import firm CILASA who has access to the company's files, a seven-man Cuban delegation was expected to arrive in Brussels on 30 November with authorization to let contracts. The group reportedly plans to examine, disassemble, and test the equipment and has a total budget of $3.5 million. (It was previously reported that Varmi has offered to sell $1 million worth of construction equipment.)

NON-BLOC COMMERCIAL RELATIONS - cont'd

The delegation is also interested in visiting European manufacturers of spare parts for the machines; they were principally interested in visiting Spain. The members of the delegation are Rene Narbona from the Cuban enterprise for the import of machinery, in addition to representatives named Respall, Hernandez, Rodriguez, Alemida (sic), Duran, and Morales. They were to stay at the Hotel Metropole in Brussels. (CIA Madrid IN 69382, 28 November, SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

CUBAN SUPPORT OF EXTERNAL SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES:

The discovery of a large cache of weapons of Cuban origin, announced by Venezuelan authorities on 28 November, provides the best evidence in recent years of major Cuban support for Latin American subversives.

The Venezuelan foreign minister has announced that Caracas will lay formal charges concerning the arms cache before a special meeting of Latin American Foreign Ministers scheduled for December. Following this, Caracas will ask that the Council of the Organization of American States be convoked for consultation on the matter.

There is definite proof to support the Venezuelan claim that the weapons came from Cuba. The approximately three tons of weapons include light automatic rifles and submachine guns identified as among those shipped to Cuba from Belgium in 1959 and 1960. There were also mortars, bazookas, recoilless rifles, and ammunition of US manufacture.

Communist documents seized by Venezuelan authorities earlier this month indicate that the equipment was destined for the Venezuelan Communists' paramilitary arm, the Armed Forces of National Liberation.

The cache was found on 1 November on a beach in Falcon State, scene of the most active guerrilla effort. The Venezuelan Government assumes that the weapons were sent from Cuba by sea. This is not confirmed, but Cuban fishing vessels were used to transport weapons to South America during the latter part of October, according to several recent clandestine reports.

For more than three years, the Castro regime has tried to avoid actions that would clearly implicate it in direct support of Latin American subversives. This exception seems to demonstrate either the high degree of urgency which Castro now gives to his subversive effort, or his estimate that the Venezuelan situation now is ripe for a final offensive.

CUBAN SUPPORT OF EXTERNAL SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES - cont'd

A Havana radiobroadcast immediately denied that Cuba was involved in the arms-infiltration attempt. The broadcast, which quoted no official source, stated that "this is a new campaign of President Romulo Betancourt against Cuba and its revolutionary government, blaming the Cubans for the explosive situation in his country and the instability of his government." (SECRET)